United Nations A/71/PV.74

General Assembly
Seventy-first session

Official Records

74th plenary meeting
Thursday, 6 April 2017, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Thomson ..... (Fiji)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 13 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Draft resolution (A/71/L.60)

The President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.60.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to introduce draft resolution A/71/L.60, entitled "Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day".

I would like to begin by thanking all the countries that are sponsoring this draft resolution and all the delegations that participated actively and constructively in the negotiations.

I would also like to thank the International Council for Small Business (ICSB), in particular its Executive Director, Mr. Ayman El Tarabishy, for all the support and information provided to us from the start of this process. The ICSB held its 61st annual World Conference here at the United Nations last year, which was attended by officials from more than 55 countries. On that occasion, the ICSB made a statement on the urgent need to designate a day recognizing the important role of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in the development of economies as a whole. That is when the Argentine authorities decided to advance and promote this important initiative in the General Assembly.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, all countries have been working on its implementation and on finding ways to ensure that each actor can contribute in the best possible way. Micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises are one such actor. That has the potential to have a lasting positive impact on the world's development needs given that, in terms of number, they dominate the global business landscape.

Estimated figures indicate that 95 per cent of companies around the world are micro-, small and medium-sized, accounting for approximately 60 per cent of private sector employment. These companies can become engines that sustain growth for long-term development in developing countries. With stronger economic growth, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises gradually assume a key role in industrial development. They can meet the growing local demand for services, which allows for increasing specialization and, moreover, support large companies with services and consumables.

We hope that the establishment of 27 June as Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day will help raise public awareness of the important role such companies play in many areas of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the many challenges they face.

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The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.60, entitled "Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/71/L.60: Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guyana, Haiti, Libya, Myanmar, Nicaragua, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa and Tunisia.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/71/L.60?

Draft resolution A/71/L.60 was adopted (resolution 71/279).

Agenda item 13 and 117 (*continued*)

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Draft resolution (A/71/L.58)

The President: I give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Mexico.

Mr. De la Mora Salcedo (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): As members are aware, paragraph 23 of draft resolution A/71/L.58 refers to the phase II preparatory meeting, which is to be held in Mexico in late November. The International Organization for Migration will hold its Council meeting from 28 November to 1 December. That will mean that two significant meetings on international migration are be held at the same time. For that reason, we have been requested to change the dates of the preparatory meeting.

In the light of that request, our intention is to hold the three-day preparatory meeting in early December to ensure that the draft resolution is consistent with the requirements of Member States and to allow for the proper planning of travel arrangement. Therefore, we propose replacing the words "in late November" with the words "in early December".

The President: The representative of Mexico has proposed an oral amendment to draft resolution A/71/L.58. May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt the oral amendment?

The oral amendment was adopted.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/71/L.58, entitled "Modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration", as orally amended. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt it?

Draft resolution A/71/L.58, as orally amended, was adopted (resolution 71/280).

The President: Before giving the floor for explanations of vote, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Ms. Amadeo (United States of America): The United States would like to thank the facilitators, you, Mr. President, and the many delegations that worked so hard to negotiate resolution 71/280. The United States joined the consensus on the resolution and looks forward to engaging actively during the preparatory process, the negotiation of the compact and the intergovernmental conference in 2018.

We appreciate the fact that the modalities resolution clarifies the role of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in providing support and expertise throughout the development of a compact and during preparations for an intergovernmental conference. With its extensive migration expertise and presence in nearly 150 countries worldwide, IOM's contributions will be critical during all phases of the compact's development and implementation. We also welcome the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for International Migration, and we are pleased that Ms. Arbour will play a leadership role in the compact process.

Throughout the negotiation of resolution 71/280, the United States underscored the importance of transparency, particularly with respect to the participation of civil society during the preparatory process and the conference. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, private sector actors and other stakeholders play an essential role on issues related to migration. For that reason, the

preparatory process and conference should be open to all concerned parties, including those that do not have consultative status in the Economic and Social Council. Their expertise and participation are essential to the success of the preparatory process, the conference and the implementation of a global migration compact. In that context, we would like to reiterate our belief in the importance of inclusiveness, fairness and transparency in compiling the list of NGOs for participation in the compact preparatory process and conference and in other United Nations summits and high-level meetings.

Any concerns that a State Member of the United Nations may have about an NGO's participation in meetings related to the compact need to be addressed transparently, not behind closed doors. NGOs must not be denied access to United Nations meetings and forums arbitrarily or for political reasons. According to paragraphs 6 (b) and 6 (c) and the corresponding footnote in the resolution, the President of the General Assembly will bring a proposed list and a final list of civil society participants to the attention of the General Assembly for both the preparatory process and the conference. It is only by comparing the proposed and final list that we will see whether an organization has been blocked. This process is inadequate because it will not make clear which Member State objected to the participation of an NGO or why the Member State objected. It is our firm belief that the source and basis of any objection should be shared with the General Assembly.

The United States attaches the greatest importance to the contributions of civil society to the work of the United Nations The compact preparatory process and the conference will have greater value if all legitimate and concerned civil society voices are heard without exception. Each special session, high-level meeting or conference is different, so the language in the resolution concerning civil society participation should not be seen as a precedent for other resolutions. In the future, this organ should strive for more transparent modalities language that will foster robust civil society participation in the work of the United Nations,

Finally, the United States would like to emphasize the importance of transparency regarding cost estimates during the negotiation of General Assembly resolutions. The Secretariat should respect the intent of rule 153 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure and provide Member States with a cost estimate before Member States conclude the informal negotiation of a resolution. The formal adoption of a resolution often occurs a number of a days or weeks after Member States conclude their informal negotiations. In order for Member States to be responsible contributors to the United Nations, the Secretariat must proactively share cost estimates at least 48 hours prior to the conclusion of informal negotiations. Member States must have sufficient time to review cost estimates and consider whether they match the activities envisioned in a draft resolution.

As noted throughout the negotiation process, the United States is interested in ensuring that this process be conducted efficiently. We are pleased that the resolution has established a voluntary trust fund that can and should be used to support the preparatory process and conference in 2018. We urge Member States to contribute to the fund accordingly. The United States looks forward to working with Members States of the United Nations, the Office of the President, the Secretariat, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Arbour, the IOM and all other stakeholders to exchange views on experiences and best practices and to develop a non-binding global migration compact that will result in practical outcomes.

Ms. Pritchard (Canada): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, New Zealand and my own country, Canada.

First, let me begin my thanking the co-facilitators, Switzerland and Mexico, for their open, transparent, cooperative and collaborative approach to preparing the modalities resolution 71/280. We appreciated the opportunity to discuss ideas throughout the process, and we are on the whole quite pleased with the outcome of the negotiations. We would like to take this opportunity to comment on three aspects of the modalities resolution.

First, human rights and the gender dimensions of international migration should be at the heart of the migration compact. We were disappointed that the language in paragraph 20 in particular was weakened in the final stages of negotiations. We are committed to ensuring that those issues are appropriately addressed and that the international human rights obligations of Member States are reflected throughout all the phases of the process leading toward the development of the global compact.

Secondly, we fully support efforts to make the process of including civil society organizations more open and inclusive. Nevertheless, we would have

preferred to see more inclusive language on participation by civil society, as civil society actors will play a critical and wide-ranging role in the global compact process. We believe that the language providing for participation on a non-objection basis may not provide an adequate level of transparency and accountability, and we would encourage Member States to exercise restraint in any objections.

Finally, we would also like to reiterate our support for the role of national human rights institutions in the process. Such institutions are unique, independent bodies created by State legislation or by constitutions that have broad human rights mandates that allow them to apply the full range of international human rights norms and standards in their work. They are well positioned to support the process of the development and implementation of the global compact, and we would encourage their participation to the greatest extent possible.

As members are aware, we very much support the decision to hold thematic and regional consultations as a first step to developing the compact before negotiations. We remain committed to actively engaging in the process to develop the migration compact as the consultations get under way, and we look forward to working with all delegations in that regard.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position.

We shall now hear statements after the adoption of the resolution 71/280.

I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Voutounou (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States.

At the outset allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the successful outcome of the negotiations on resolution 71/280, entitled "Modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration". In particular, let me thank the co-facilitators and their teams for their efforts to bring this important exercise to a successful conclusion.

These modalities lay the basis for our joint work in the next two years and will ensure the successful adoption of the global compact for migration in September 2018. We also note with satisfaction a growing awareness of the truly global nature of migration issues, as well as an understanding of the need for global consensus and cooperation.

While recognizing the efforts of the facilitators in finding common ground and the flexibility of all partners, the European Union and its States members regret that it was not possible to include a reference to the non-legal and binding nature of the outcome document. While we remain committed to engage constructively in the upcoming negotiations, it is our understanding that our discussion will result in an action-oriented document that will not be legally binding. We have stressed that throughout the negotiations for the modalities resolution. Although it is not reflected in the document, we consider that the basis for our future engagement.

The President: I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to Ambassador Juan José Gómez Camacho of Mexico and Ambassador Jürg Lauberof Switzerland, the co-facilitators of the informal consultations, who demonstrated great ability and patience in their conduct of the discussions and complex negotiations on resolution 71/280. I also thank Member States for their valuable contributions to reaching an agreement on the resolution.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 13 and 117.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 133, 134, 140 and 148.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Ms. Diana Minyi Lee of Singapore, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Fifth Committee before the Assembly.

Ms. Lee (Singapore), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour to introduce to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee, which contain recommendations on issues considered during the first part of the resumed seventy-first session of the General Assembly. The Fifth Committee met from 6 to 31 March and held five plenary meetings, as well as numerous informal and informal-informal consultations. The Committee's report on agenda item 115, "Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary

organs and other appointments", was already considered by the Assembly at its seventieth plenary meeting on 8 March.

Let me now introduce the additional reports of the Fifth Committee, which contain recommendations on issues that require action by the General Assembly.

Under agenda item 134, "Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017", in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/71/716/Add.1, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution on special subjects relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote. Under the same agenda item, the Committee provides advice to the General Assembly on programme budget implications should it adopt draft resolution A/71/L.58. The relevant report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/71/854.

Under agenda item 140, "Joint Inspection Unit", in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/71/855 the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 148, "Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals", in paragraph 6 of its report contained in document A/71/704/Add.1 the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution that was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

On agenda item 133, "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", in paragraph 8 of its report contained in document A/71/717/Add.1 the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution entitled "Progress towards an accountability framework in the United Nations Secretariat", which was adopted by the Committee without a vote. In paragraph 9 of the same report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the draft decision entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration", which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

I thank delegations for their cooperation during this session and for the spirit of compromise, which enabled the Committee to finish its work on time.

I would also like to thank the Chair of the Committee, Ambassador Rhonda King, for her guidance and encouragement. I look forward to working with her and my fellow members of the Bureau in preparation for and towards the success of the forthcoming second resumed session in May.

Finally, please allow me to thank and acknowledge the members of the Secretariat who have worked tirelessly to support the Committee: Ms. Sharon Van Buerle; Ms. Sarah Mueller; Ms. Lindsay Edwards; Ms. Geraldine Velandria; Ms. Rogena Inductivo; Ms. Ilene McGrade; Ms. Ivanka Sporysova; Mr. Joseph Nemeth; Mr. Andrew Kowalchuk; and Mr. Bobby Strano.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Her Excellency Ms. Inga Rhonda King, the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations and Chair of the Fifth Committee, the members of the Bureau, the Secretary of the Committee and representatives for completing the work of the Committee in an efficient and timely manner and for a job well done. I congratulate all of them.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind delegations that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered a main committee and in a plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in the plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I further remind delegations that, also in accordance with decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that

we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless notified otherwise in advance. That means that we will proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Committee.

Agenda item 134 (*continued*)

Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/71/716/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 71/272 B).

The President: I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Concerning part I of resolution 71/272 B, my delegation has a reservation with regard to allocating funds to the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism for the Syrian Arab Republic. It is an unjustified decision that reflects well-known positions of some Member States that are inimical to my country. Some of these States support armed terrorist groups wreaking havoc in my country. Furthermore, the Mechanism has proved to be paralysed and ineffective. We therefore believe that assistance should be provided from within Syrian territory and in full cooperation and coordination with the Syrian Government.

In this regard, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses its principled, firm position on the provision of humanitarian assistance to all those in need without discrimination in accordance with our constitutional obligations. We also stress that we shall continue to cooperate with the United Nations and its agencies to provide humanitarian assistance as long as the United Nations guidelines relating to humanitarian assistance are respected, as reflected in the annex to resolution 46/182, pertaining to the provision of humanitarian assistance, which must be done in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality.

Syria believes that resolution 71/282 B is not credible, either in numbers of beneficiaries or in the amount of assistance that have been distributed. We also reject allegations and reports of the Secretary-General that the mission provided humanitarian assistance without incident or complaints from any party.

My delegation joined the consensus on part VII of the resolution, which relates to special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council, including the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM). This proceeds from our principled position on the condemnation of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The use of such weapons is immoral and unacceptable. We did so although we reject all allegations and accusations in the report of the JIM, which are not neutral, not objective and have many illegal defects that affect its credibility.

My delegation also stresses its objection to funding from the Trust Fund that was created through voluntary contributions outside the regular budget. The Fund will be used in a political manner outside the purview of the membership of the General Assembly. Our objection also takes into consideration the fact that Security Council resolutions 2235 (2015) and 2319 (2016) did not take up the issue of funding. Therefore, according to current procedures, the Mechanism should be funded in full from the regular budget of the United Nations, in order to ensure that contributing States do not interfere in its operations, particularly those Member States well known for their positions inimical to my country and their support for terrorist armed groups attempting to destroy my country on their behalf.

In conclusion, my Government is committed to fulfilling all the obligations it undertook on when it joined the Chemical Weapons Convention and reiterates its determination to rid the country of all chemical weapons.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 140

Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/71/855)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

We shall now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 71/281).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 140.

Agenda item 148 (*continued*)

Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/71/704/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution, entitled "Construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Arusha branch", recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 71/282).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 148.

Agenda item 133 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/71/717/Add.1)

The President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report and a draft decision recommended in paragraph 9 of the same report. We shall now take action on the draft resolution and the draft decision, one by one.

The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution, entitled "Progress towards an accountability system in the United Nations Secretariat", contained in paragraph 8 of the report. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 71/283).

The President: The Assembly will now take action on the draft decision, entitled "Questions deferred for future consideration", contained in paragraph 9 of the report. The Fifth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted (decision 71/546 B).

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 133.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Fifth Committee before it for this meeting.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.